Listing of the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) An answering machine detection method for a voice message delivery system, comprising:

    (a) placing an outbound call to a telephone line of a Recipient;

    (b) detecting a telephone line pick-up;

    (c) performing echo cancellation on the outbound call:

    (d) playing a prompt <u>to introduce the outbound call to a live Recipient, wherein the prompt is selected from the group consisting of "This is a message from [Sender's name]," "This is a call from [Sender's name]," and "[Sender's name] has sent you a message."</u>; and

    (e) determining, at a voice message sewer, that the telephone line pick-up was by an existing answering machine when talk-over occurs at the same time as at least a portion of the playing of the prompt, the talk-over comprising voice energy coming from the telephone line of the Recipient.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously presented) The answering machine detection method of claim 1 further comprising:

    (f) waiting for silence when the telephone line pick-up was by the existing answering machine;

    (g) playing a first message when the telephone line pick-up was by the existing answering machine; and

    (h) playing a second message when the telephone line pick-up was by a live Recipient.

4. (Previously presented) The answering machine detection method of claim 3 further comprising:

    (i) detecting talk-over by the existing answering machine during the playing of the first message; and

    (j) restarting the playing of the first message.

5. (Previously presented) The answering machine detection method of claim 3, wherein the first message is different from the second message.

6. (Currently amended) The answering machine detection method of claim 3 further comprising:

(i) (k) playing at least one interactive option when the telephone line pick-up was by the live Recipient.

7. (Currently amended) The answering machine detection method of claim 6 further comprising:

(j) (l) playing at least one interactive reject option when the telephone line pick-up was by the live Recipient.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously presented) The answering machine detection method of claim 1, wherein the playing of the prompt occurs within one second of detecting the telephone line pick-up.

11. (Previously presented) The answering machine detection method of claim 1 further comprising detecting voice energy after detecting the telephone line pick-up, and wherein the playing of the prompt occurs within one second of detecting the voice energy.

12. (Previously presented) The answering machine detection method of claim 1 further comprising detecting voice energy and an end of that voice energy after detecting the telephone line pick-up, and wherein the playing of the prompt occurs within one second of detecting the end of the voice energy.

13 -21. (Cancelled)